CLAIMS

1. 1. An apparatus comprising:
2.   at least one processor;
3.   a memory coupled to the at least one processor;
4.   class configuration data comprising a plurality of entries residing in the memory, each
5. class configuration entry including a key-value pair, wherein the key includes information
6. relating to a selected processing context and the value includes configuration data for a class
7. in the selected processing context; and
8.   an object oriented class replacement mechanism residing in the memory and executed
9. by the at least one processor that generates an instance of a selected class by using a key that
10. includes context information to access the appropriate entry in the class configuration data.

1. 2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the key comprises context information appended to
2. a class identifier.

1. 3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the class identifier comprises a class token that
2. comprises a text string.

1. 4. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a factory object that generates an instance
2. of the selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class configuration data
3. using the key.

1. 5. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a key generator mechanism that generates
2. the key from a class identifier and from the context information.

1   6. A method for creating an instance of an object oriented class, the method comprising

2   the steps of:

3   (1) retrieving configuration data corresponding to the class in a selected

4   processing context using a corresponding key that includes information relating to the

5   selected processing context; and

6   (2) instantiating the instance of the class using the retrieved configuration data.

1   7.   The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of storing the configuration data

2   with the corresponding key.

1   8.   The method of claim 7 wherein the step of storing the configuration data with the

2   corresponding key comprises the step of generating a key from a class identifier and from

3   the context information.

1   9. The method of claim 6 wherein the key comprises context information appended to a

2   class identifier.

1   10. The method of claim 9 wherein the class identifier comprises a class token that

2   comprises a text string.

1   11. The method of claim 6 further comprising the step of generating the key from a class

2   identifier and from the context information.

1   12. A method for replacing an existing class with a replacement class in a distributed

2   object environment, the method comprising the steps of:

3   (1) storing configuration data for the existing class using a corresponding key that

4   includes information relating to a selected processing context;

5   (2) replacing the configuration data for the existing class with configuration data

6   for the replacement class while maintaining the same corresponding key;

7   (3) initiating the creation of an instance of the replacement class;

8   (4) generating a key that includes information relating to the current processing

9   context;

10   (5) retrieving the configuration data for the replacement class using the generated

11   key; and

12   (6) creating an instance of the replacement class according to the retrieved

13   configuration data for the replacement class.

1   13. A program product comprising:

2   an object oriented class replacement mechanism that generates an instance of a

3   selected class by using a key that includes information relating to a selected processing

4   context to access an appropriate entry in class configuration data stored external to the

5   class; and

6   signal bearing media bearing the object oriented class replacement mechanism.

1   14. The program product of claim 13 wherein said signal bearing media comprises

2   recordable media.

1   15. The program product of claim 13 wherein said signal bearing media comprises

2   transmission media.

1   16. The program product of claim 13 wherein the key comprises context information

2   appended to a class identifier.

1   17. The program product of claim 16 wherein the class identifier comprises a class token

2   that comprises a text string.

1   18. The program product of claim 13 further comprising a factory object that generates

2   an instance of the selected class by accessing the appropriate entry in the class

3   configuration data using the key.

1   19. The program product of claim 13 further comprising a key generator mechanism that

2   generates the key from a class identifier and from the context information.

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